

241 chin-uch (May 20-June 8), an offering is
782 made to the supernatural being which
reigns over it. The natives have vague no-
[825] tions of the nature of this being. They say
that uch is the name of a small insect which
spoils the pozole and, also, of the *tlacuache*
or *zarigueya* which often destroys the mil-
pa. The offering, hung at the entrance of
the hut, consists of a ball of pozole wrapped
in plantain leaf, a red chile, a tortilla, an
ear of corn, and a little stick like the kind
used to turn the ear cooking over hot coals.

241 All objects are minute in size. When the
782 offering achieves its purpose, on the com-
787 pletion of a 20-day period, the atmosphere
becomes hazy "as if there were smoke." It is
explained that "the chin-uch burned its
house," which forecasts a favorable sun for
development of the milpa. If such a sign
should not appear on the indicated date or
at the end of the next month of *mukul-uch*
(June 9-28), the forecast is ominous and
indicates that the rains will be excessive,
greatly harming the milpa.

778 Another mukul-mixa is performed in Ox-
796 chuc, in homage to the hill called Ikal-Ajau,
[184] near the ceremonial center, of which the
Indians say "it is a living hill." The name of
the hill is that of the ancient hill worshipped
by the Oxchuequeños. Nuñez de la Vega
(in Becerra, 1933, p. 293) reports: "Those
of Oxchuc and other towns of Los Llanos
venerate very much the idol which they call
Icalajau, which means principal Negro or
[789] lord of the Negroes." This Mass, performed
the first days of June, prevents locusts and
other plagues from coming.

241 Once the crop is in the granary, other
78 family prayers are said before the household
cross, to give thanks for the good received
and to petition the supernatural beings to
protect the grain from insects and rodents.

Other Subsistence Resources

- 262 Other food resources include raising
- 235 chickens and pigs. A family averages about
- [231] 10 chickens, using the eggs as money when
- [437] [P. 202-B]

- 262 they visit the regional market. Only during
• 235 illness or fiesta are both chickens and eggs
[437] eaten.

231 In towns like Tenejapa and Cancun, In-
439 dians buy small pigs from the Ladinos of
the center, fatten them for 8 or 10 months,
then sell them to the Ladinos, who slaugh-
ter them and sell the meat to the Indians.
As may be supposed, in this sort of sym-
biosis the greatest profit accrues to the La-
[454] dinos. However, the Indians more often
keep the money from selling pigs to meet
emergencies or expenses of clothing, tools,
and fiestas.

262 Food Habits

262 Corn, beans, chile, and squash are the
core of Indian diet, supplemented by ma-
nioc, sweetpotato, potato, and chayote. One
263 or more chayote trees next to the house are
common; every part of the chayote is used—
fruit, tender leaves, and root—usually
boiled with salt. Wild herbs are eaten raw
or cooked. Among the raw ones are *culix-
uamal*, *xhix-uamal*, and *alauanex*, the last a
wild radish which Ladinos call "the Indian's
radish." Herbs that are cooked include *tzul*
and *tuxac*. Some herbs are eaten both raw
or cooked: *verdolaga* or *chic-xecul*, *muem*
(*hierba mora*), *maj-tas*, *tzuy*, and *San Sibro*
[276] *Uamal*. The last is a small grass with long
thin leaves which the Indians grind and add
to give a better taste to the *pilico* or wild
tobacco. This is called *pozil-may*, which is
like saying "medicinal pilico." Ladinos use
its leaves in tea sweetened with *panela*.

262 There are three main meals during the
264 course of the day: breakfast (*ue-el sab*),
which consists of atole or pozole, beans,
chile, and tortillas; lunch (*ue-el olical*) of
the same foods plus a vegetable such as
squash or chayote; and supper (*ue-el x-
malcal*), with atole, tortillas, beans, and
chile. In Tenejapa rabbit meat is frequently
on the table. In Amatenango, Aguacate-
nango, and Pinola, greater contact with La-
dinos has added coffee, wheat bread, var-

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